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Songs from the Silent Land

LOUIS VERNON LEDOUX





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SONGS FROM THE SILENT LAND



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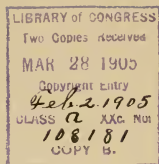
By

LOUIS VERNON LEDOUX

BRENTANO'S

NEW YORK

MCMV



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TO MY FATHER

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POEMS OF LIFE

Night in the Silent Land

*"The silence sank
Like music on my heart."*

ALONE with God and thee; a moonless night
And silver silent stars;
Alone with thee and God; a gleam of white
Ere waking day unbars
Her dusky Eastern lattice; clear on high
A sapphire planet gems the purple sky.

Alone, alone with thee; a world asleep;
A rhapsody of peace;
A soundless solitude of calm; a deep
Oblivion where cease
All transient things, and buried meanings come
In cosmic undertones through daylight dumb.

Alone with God and thee while Church and State,
And social aims, and strife,
And usual cares grow dim; with soul elate
I pass from seeming life
To life indeed; and softly—sweet and clear,
A thrush, half-dreaming, murmurs "Dawn is near."

While day's exhausted clamor gently sleeps,
With watching worlds above,
Unfathomed beauty here her vigil keeps:—
Alone with God and love,
Ere gradual dawn tumultuous day disclose,
We face immortal calm, serene repose.

Eagle Rock.

The Garden of Youth

To S. P. L.

I

I HAD a garden where for sunless days
And many starless nights, the dusky ways
Were weed-o'ergrown and silent. There I heard
No voice of love low calling to its own,
And found nor joy nor beauty; but alone
I lived, till through the silence like a bird
Full-throated, came the music of a friend.

II

All others ever paused without the gate
Of that lone garden of my heart, for Fate
Had willed that none might ever enter there
Till he should come. And once, in singing May,
When all the world was lyric, and the day
Grew faint with beauty till it could not bear
The burning rapture of the sun, he came.

III

He brought the glory of his love's clear light,
And all the place grew beautiful and bright,
And all the paths were filled with fragrance. Soon
He learned to know the dim, moss-covered ways;
The grassy twilight aisles wherein the day's
Most perfect beauty and the wealth of June
Had never burned, till he had brought them there.

The Garden of Youth

IV

He saw the somber flowers where they grew
In dusky places, washed by nightly dew,
And odorless from lack of light and love.
Yet some seemed even beautiful to him;
And some he gathered there; his eyes all dim
With tears of gladness that the God above
Had granted him this garden for his charge.

V

Beneath his love the flowers grew more fair,
And some of brighter hue he planted there;
While roses through the weeds began to climb.
The place no more was lonely, for he knew
Each winding pathway—how each blossom grew:
And long ere yet a second summer time
Had turned the world to gladness, we were one.

VI

One were we then in heart and thought, for all
My soul leapt joyful at his faintest call;
And all my life was as an open book
To him. He understood me, felt each hope
And joy and fear and doubt, and all the scope
Of all my life, whereon but he could look
With perfect comprehension, through his love.

The Garden of Youth

VII

We were alike, we two, in those glad days;
One common purpose thrilled through all our ways
And bound us in that bond of unity
Which those alone can know whose souls are knit
By mutual aspiration, and are lit
By one absorbing dream of things to be;
One hope, one goal to seek through all the world.

VIII

Another came—a woman—and in her
He found the incarnation of his dream;
From her deep eyes he caught the lucent gleam
Of life's eternal beauty; and in her
He saw the vision he had ever sought,
And found it fairer than his fairest thought;
And joyed in this glad triumph of his quest.

IX

His music spoke no more of far-off things
But half perceived, in fleeting ecstasies,
Intangible as is the summer's breeze
Which bears some message on its fragrant wings,
But still is viewless, passing like the ghost
Of beauty, vaguely felt, and fading most
When most we long to seize it for our own:

The Garden of Youth

X

But now it breathed a song instinct with life
And throbbing, for his love's strong passion thrilled
Through every vacant note, and surging filled
The songs of dead musicians—passion rife—
With resurrected meaning. Now he saw
That not alone in some far mystic law
Was beauty found, but here, throughout the world.

XI

As some sweet violin which silent lies
With no warm hand to wake it, trembling knows
Another's voice, and as the music flows,
Awakes, while from its vibrant strings there flies
An answering melody: so she awoke
And violin to violin they spoke
The thoughts which lie too deep for words to frame.

XII

And I?—I shall be still his friend
And hers for him, and though my grief must be
Most bitter, that another is to thee,
My friend, more near than I; that now an end
Is come to that glad time when we could share
Our joys, our sadness and each secret care,
I shall be happy in thy happiness.

The Garden of Youth

XIII

The garden of my heart will still be fair,
And bright the flowers thou hast planted there;
And full of fragrant memories, all the ways
That thou didst learn to tread, for well I know
That thou wilt come again, and whisper low
Thy love for that lone place: and all our days
Thy friendship shall not pass, but still endure.

"Belvoir."

Boyhood

I STAND on the brink of a stormless sea,
With hope's young eyes in wonder wide,
And watch the sun-swept ripples glide
Toward dreaming shores of eternity.

The ocean is kind, for the wavelets play
With smile and shimmer about my feet,
And scatter benediction sweet
In drops of silent falling spray.

The wind is still; the deep is calm;
My soul looks down through the visioned years
And finds no presage of grief or tears,
For the sea will cradle my bark from harm.

"Skyrie."

Youth

I SING the joy of the wind-swept woods,
The joy of the love-lit sky,
The joy of the solemn solitudes
Where the stars burn clear on high:

For life is a joyous song of love,
Of beauty and delight,
And human souls in cadence move
With the rhythmic hymn of night.

I sing with the winds, the stars, and sun,
As the world rolls on its way,
A song of cosmic joy, begun
At the birth of night and day:

For life is a perfect symphony
With God and His world in tune,
And I feel the vibrant harmony
Of the pulsing days of June.

"Skyrie."

“O Norns, Is the Heart of a Boy God’s Lie?”

ALONE with Nature on a joyous day,
We wandered through the forest, loving all
The wondrous beauty of the youthful May,
And gloried in the Spring. We heard the call
Of birds that sang their rippling notes of love,
Full-throated, chanting praise to God above.

We saw the orchids—yellow, red and white,
Agleam 'mid purple shade of dusky pines;
And ferns that sway in woven forest light,
Cradled in vales where languorous day reclines;
While 'gainst the gray of lichen'd cliffs on high,
The laurel glowed like clouds in dawn's dim sky.

The sense of beauty thrilled us, till we saw
Naught but effulgent, rapturous beauty; heard
And felt but beauty only. All the law
Of life was summed in beauty. Like a bird
The world sang pæans rich with pure delight,
And gave no presage of the coming night.

We felt that life had found itself divine.
The ecstasy of Nature filled our hearts
With voiceless adoration; till supine
The twilight shadows lengthened, and the darts
Of darkness rustled through the drowsy trees,
And spirit voices stole along the breeze.

"O Norns, Is the Heart of a Boy God's Lie?"

Then suddenly our thought was framed in speech,
And all the hopes and all the dreams of youth
Were voiced in low yet fervent words; for each
Was starting on the long life-search for truth,
And each had seen a vision of the way,
And each was young as eager-hearted May.

We spoke of beauty—how it wrapped us round;
And how the world was fair, and life was sweet;
How God was love; and every softest sound
A note in Nature's harmony complete.
And then a jocund bird began to sing,
That all of life was one transcendent Spring.

But sadly down the wind a whisper stole,
And woke remembrance of the warning cry
Of those who knew this Springtime of the soul,
Yet saw it slowly wane, and pale, and die.
They trusted beauty through their pulsing youth,
But found a phantom wailing, "What is truth?"

I cried: "They say this glory all must fade,
For life will seize us with relentless hand;
That all our sunlight soon will turn to shade;
That all the realm of beauty is a land
Of dreams and visions doomed to pass away,
And not God's prophecy of endless day."

But through the twilight came her answer clear:
"It cannot be that this is all a dream!
It is too wonderful, and God is near
Us now. Yet if it prove a transient gleam

“ O Norns, Is the Heart of a Boy God’s Lie? ”

Before the dark, and hope is all a lie,
I pray that, dreaming ever, we may die! ”

So, musing, passed we through the forest dim,
While evening spread the mantle of the dew;
And saw, far up the East, a lustrous rim
Of gold upon a mountain top, and knew
A beauty purer far than sunlit May,
And cried: “ The night may fairer prove than day! ”

“ Skyrrie.”

Sunshine and Shadow

ONE of life's chapters ended,
Mingled of joy and pain,
Of summer sunlight blended
With wintry storm and rain:

Opened with all the gladness
Of a cloudless day in Spring,
Closing with all the sadness
That a dying hope can bring.

Life, like this chapter ended,
Is mingled of joy and pain;
With all our hopes is blended
The knowledge that never again

Shall we find the perfect gladness
Of youth's unclouded Spring,
But ever a tone of sadness
Must color the songs we sing.

"Skyrie."

Inasmuch

The Violin of St. Anne de Beaupré.

QUEBEC.

PART I

A LONG the lazy windings of a road
Walked slowly toward the shrine of kind
Saint Anne,

A man who went his way deep lost in dreams.
His thoughtful face in every lineament
Showed markings of the mystic characters
Which rank and education ever grave
In deepening lines of subtlest tracery.
He passed beneath the opal-tinted sky,
Among the shadows of the summer clouds,
Nor seemed to heed the singing of the birds,
Nor see the lavish beauty of the morn;
But ever dreaming, thought of other days,
Regretting all the fleeting, vanished years
Of bright enchantments—glowing images—
When the fair springtime of his life was glad
As silver-throated singing of a lark.
He carried in his hand a violin
Which sometimes he would touch with fond caress,
As though it were his child, and knew his love.
Once in his dream he softly spoke to it
With voice as low and musically sweet
As is a mother's near her sleeping babe.
“I love thee, comrade of those bygone days
When life was fresh as blossoms of the May,
And trouble, care and pain were all unknown:
For when pale sorrow cast her heavy pall
Slow falling o'er my life of happiness,
And all that marked earth's mastery had gone,

Then thou didst cross with me the moaning sea—
Companion of my hours of bitterness—
And answer to the homeless, whispering wind,
And comprehend those wild, far-wailing voices,
Which wander pathless from the twilight depths,
To sob across the shimmering starlit waves.
And sometimes when the voice of speechless things
Breathes through the listening stillness of the soul
Longings which cannot find expressive words
In human speech, doth thy pure music wake
My sleeping spirit to a finer sense,
That I may apprehend the primal thoughts
Which vibrate through the clamor of our lives.
Oh thou art more than comrade, lover, friend,
Thou canst interpret every vagrant mood;
And sing throughout the day or lingering night,
Remembered songs of home and happiness.”

The dream was ended, for he saw alone
Beside a sudden turning of the way
A crippled child, unkempt, and thin, and wan.
The man stood gazing at his sad young face,
And saw that speechless yearning of the eyes
Which tells of sleepless nights, and days of pain,
And sorrows of the prematurely old.
His heart was touched; and to the child he said:
“Why dost thou wait in hopeless weariness,
Nor ever seek the aid of kind Saint Anne?
This is the Sabbath morning, and to-day
The priest will pass the holy relic through
The kneeling throng, that those who, praying there,
With souls upraised in ecstasy of faith,

May feel their health and life come flooding back,
Like showers on a waste of burning sand.”
To him the child, slow speaking, sadly said:—
“The custom is that those who may be healed
Shall bring rich gifts to prove their gratitude;
But I am quite alone and dare not go;
For after I were cured of all my pain
I could bring nothing to the kindly saint.”
The man looked down upon the lonely child,
And spoke impulsively in sudden love:—
“Come, I will take thee to the holy place,
And stand by thee while thou dost tell the priest
Thy need, and pray beside thee to the Saint;
And if our prayer is heard, and healing comes,
Then I will lay a gift upon the shrine
In gratitude for thy frail life, new won,
That thou mayst grow to fullest manly strength,
And not pass down the shivering way of death,
Unknowing all the gladness of the world.”
The child sat listening, wrapped in wonderment;
And then within the sad, expressive eyes,
There shone a light of startled new-born hope:
As though his soul had burst its prison walls,
And leapt courageous into richer life.

PART II

The throng passed slowly down the long dim aisle,
And spoke in tones subdued, fulfill'd with awe
Of sensing that the power of God had passed
Among them as they knelt in ecstasy.
A few there were whose flickering faith had failed;

And these stole sadly past the sacred door,
From solemn twilight of the holy place,
To fervid glory of the summer sun,
Their faces gray with darkness of despair.
But gladly sprang the child from out the church;
The yearning look of sadness all was gone,
As though an angel's finger had erased
The lines of sorrow, and had written there
The joyful tidings of a fairer life.
At length the priest stepped slowly down the nave
With eyes still haunted by the passing presence,
And saw the child, and gravely said to him:
"Wilt thou not bring a gift to good St. Anne?"
For him his friend made answer questioning:—
"What is it we should give to show our thanks?"
The priest in kindly tones responding, said,
"The Saint gives value to the gifts we bring
Not from their own inherent worth; for she
Will never need the riches of the world,
Nor wish the things which, being kept or given,
Can make no difference in the giver's life:
She asks from each a sacrificial act
To prove his love, and so the custom is
To give of all our worldly goods the thing
We value most, and loving, hold most dear."

A silence fell upon the little group;
And, as the gentle father turned to go,
With aged lips breathing his benison
Upon the child, who still was wondering
At all the unguessed sweetness of the world;

The other stood with anguish in his eyes,
For through his mind had flashed a sudden thought
Which burned its pathway to his troubled soul.
“O God!” he cried in terror, “no, not that!”
Then to the startled priest he stammering said:
“To-night will I bring something to the shrine—”
And stumbling, almost falling, fled away,
Nor heard the plaintive calling of the child.
He passed among the peaceful peasant folk
Unheeding; till at last he strayed alone
To where the vast dim river stretches down
To seek the frozen North, there paused, and strove
To win the battle of self-mastery.
Along the forest lonely winds came sobbing
Like deathless spirits on the shores of sleep,
And wailed their own wild song of endless sadness,
Commingling with the discords of his soul.
Into his life the gathering shadows crept,
And twined their ghostly tendrils ’round his heart;
He felt the breath of darkness on his face,
And woke as from a transient dream of pain
To keener suffering of reality:—
“O Christ! Why dost Thou ask of me this thing,
This only thing I cannot yield to Thee?
Thou hast had all which made my life seem sweet
But this one thing, and I did never search
Thy hidden purpose or distrust Thy love;
But bore the frequent sorrows Thou didst send
With trustful faith, for still Thy world seemed bright
Through this one thing which spoke to me of Thee,
And cheered my days of utter loneliness,
And gave me courage to live out the life

That Thou didst give; And now must I lose this?
O Father, I would gladly die for Thee;
But do not ask that I should live alone;
I cannot, will not give my violin!"

Impulsively he seized his instrument,
And drew the bow across the waiting strings,
And waked the warm vibrations of its voice:
The music made his sufferings still more deep.
He paused, and in the pause he cried aloud:
"It is not just that I should have to give
This thing I loved through all the mournful years.
My life has been a wreck of shattered hopes,
Would God complete with this my misery?
The child was naught to me, I only thought
To do a deed of love, in thankfulness
For that sad solace of my solitude—
That only relic of my happiness
Which has been left to me—my violin;
And now, in strange requital of my act
Could God demand a bitter sacrifice
Which is so needless, bringing only pain?
This giving of some well beloved thing
Is custom merely, not a changeless law
Of His own making: He does not exact
This deed from me in payment for His love;
The gift is voluntary, merely proof
Of gratitude that He has heard our prayer:
Ah no, I cannot, need not give it up."

Again he drew his bow across the strings;
The sobbing music, doubtful, tremulous,
In cadence faded through the forest dim,
And mingled with the silver moonlight, yearning

To know its passionless calm purity.
The stars moved slowly on their tranquil way,
And one of them fell sadly from its place
Alone and dying, toward the dusky earth,
While still he played in lonely misery.
At last a subtle change came in the song:
The wailing voices ceased and fled away
Like weary wraiths before the flushing dawn;
And as they passed a stronger spirit spoke
Among the mournful minor melodies.
The sound of sadness had not yet quite left
The song, but sank subdued, while clear and calm
The music rose in firmness masterful
Of high resolve and hard won victory.

PART III

Slowly and sadly through the empty nave
The pale musician stole. His cheeks were wan,
And on his face the marks of recent tears.
He came to where the tapers burned, and knelt;
Still kneeling, took the instrument he loved,
And laid it gently on the altar steps—
Then turned to go, but moving back again,
He touched it softly, sobbing like a child;
Then strode with firmness from the silent church
Into the silence of the night beyond.
And as he went, the moon broke through a cloud,
And showed the sudden glory of his face.

"Ardmore."

The Cathedral

FULL of a sense of failure, sad, depressed
With struggle toward a goal which ever flew
Before me like a phantom light, and grew
More distant as I followed on the quest;
I passed along a crowded avenue,
And there I met a friend, who quickly guessed
My sadness; and my thought but half expressed
Was answered quickly; for the mood he knew.

He took me where a great cathedral stands
With towers pointing toward the tranquil sky,
And led me then within a quiet shrine,
Where wearily I raised imploring hands
In silent prayer; till came a clear reply
Flooding my soul with strength and calm divine.

"Skyrie."

Life in The Silent Land

A LONE and alone in my world of dreams,
With many around me and no one near,
Seeking for comradeship oft I came
To books, the friends that my soul held dear.

Shelley has told me, here in this room,
Of all the visions his youth found fair,
Of all the gloom of his manhood's prime
When his hopes, like phantoms, dissolved in air.

And I love the beautiful Sensitive Plant,
For have I not heard it o'er and o'er
Whisper its confidence low and sad,
Till heedless of all the clamor and roar

Of the living death in the outer world,
My spirit has roamed to the Silent Land
With Shelley for guide, and Plato's word
Helping me see and understand.

I have lived so long in that mystic sphere
Where dreams are real and the Spring shall last,
That the world of sense is far and dim,
And material things are fading fast.

Often I long to speak of the place
Where the flowers are flowers and something more;
Where the soul is cradled in lustral light
Of the beauty that I, with my life adore.

Life in the Silent Land

I fain would tell of my visions and dreams;
Would voice my love of the Silent Land;
And I give of my life with a craving deep
To many who never can understand.

But the light that hallows the life I live
Has been seen by one who has found the way
To the far-off place where my spirit dwells,
And he will harken to all I say.

No longer alone in my world of dreams,
I can tell my love of the Silent Land;
And voice the life that I lived apart
To him, for I know he will understand.

"Skyrie."

Freedom

I

FREE! Ah God I am free,
From the shadowed bondage of years,
From the deepening mist of tears
I am free, Ah God! I am free.

Free to follow my star,
The star of my life's sole aim,
Which shines with so clear a flame,
In the boundless sky afar.

II

For years on a funeral pyre
I burned my dreams and my hope,
And never had I full scope
For the life of my soul's desire.

But ever through shrouding night
Above, on high and afar,
In glory glowed that star
With a fair transcendent light.

I tried to forget its glory:
Thou knowest it could not be.

III

I tried to forget my life's ideal,
And blind myself to the things I love;

Freedom

But that flaming star still burned above,
And while it burns I must ever feel
The wondrous thoughts that its beams reveal.

Dear God thou knowest the darkening years
When I tried to walk in the loveless way
Where I deemed I saw that my duty lay;
Thou knowest my life, and the haunting fears,
And all the doubts of those lingering years.

Ah God, I feel them rising now!

IV

Shall I have many years to follow on
And follow gladly all my dream's behest?
And shall I reach the glory that has shone
Around me? Shall I then achieve the quest?

Or must my life be as the shimmering dew
Which mirrors beauty dimly in the dawn,
Yet passes ere it can reflect the true
Perfection of the day, unwept, forlorn?

V

Is this my dream a phantom Northern light?
A mere mirage of manhood's flushing dawn?
Or shall the purple-shadowed lustrous morn
Transfigured gather all the day's delight?

Freedom

Ah God thou knowest that the dream is fair,
That I would follow toward the starry goal;
And yet these clinging doubts assail my soul—
And God, my God, I fail! hear Thou my prayer.

VI

The silent long arcades of coming years
Stretch ghost-like toward the dusk of things to be,
But flaming through the twilight still appears
My star, I rise, I follow, I am free!

VII

And now that the dark and the doubt are fled,
And now that the joyless days are dead,
And now that duty is love's own way,
And night is glad as the dawn of day,

I shall follow my star with heart intent,
And every pulse of my being bent
On the one ideal of my longing soul
Till I come, Ah God! to the far-off goal.

New York.

“Follow the Gleam”

A RADIANT vision flashed upon my view,
A gleam of beauty on the hills of thought,
And I have followed while the glory flew
From peak to peak. Yet vainly have I sought
To scale the heights and clasp the living fire
Which like a beacon in a storm-swept night
Impels me toward the goal of strong desire,
While hope transfigured glows within its light.

With trebled courage onward still I climb
’Mid snow and ice, o’er cliff and lone ravine,
While brighter flames the lustre through the dark,
But yet afar—how far!—and many a time
I fall, but still I strive, for still serene
The beacon burns, and in my soul a spark.

“*Skyrie.*”

POEMS OF LOVE

Song of Dawn

OUT of the depths of sunrise come!
Ye thoughts of infinite love.
The stars of dawn are wan and dumb,
And far in the height above
The moon is pale from her long delight
In the kiss of her unseen lord, the night.

Bright in the East the dawning climbs;
And lo! the sun draws near;
High on a bough the robin chimes
His happy matins clear.
From the bird's blithe song to the skies above
The whole glad world is aflood with love.

The hymn of the world finds an echo low,
An echo faint and far,
In my heart whose pulse with love beats slow,
Dreaming of her—my Star
Who sleeps, not knowing I wake to sing
The infinite thoughts that dawn must bring.

"Skyrie."

Love-Song

I

LIFE is a song of love
When thou art near;
A low, sweet song of love,
Serene and clear,
When thou art near.

II

But when thou art afar
The world grows drear;
And life's one holy star
By clouds of fear,
Is darkened here.

III

If thou couldst love me so
As I love thee;
And whisper soft and low
Thy love for me,
As I to thee;

IV

Then would we never part
On earth below,
But ever one in heart
We two would go,
United so.

Love-Song

V

And if death's summons came
To call us far,
Our love would be the same
Across the bar,
Where seraphs are.

VI

For God would surely see
Our life above
Could never perfect be,
Unless our love
Were there above.

"Skyrie."

“Dass Du Mich Liebst,
Macht Mich Mir
Werth”

A QUEST of dim and changing goals was life,
Monotonous with struggle and retreat;
With shifting purposes and aimless strife,—
Full of the sadness of a slow defeat.
But now the mocking world has changed for me,
Because of one sweet word that thou hast said;
That all my life is but my love for thee,
And effort toward a constant goal is sped.
For now I know that thou dost love me, dear,
The baffling conflict is no longer hard;
I ever feel thy watching spirit near,
My purpose with thy changeless love to guard.
Thy love has saved me from myself, that thought,
Past doubt, to calm accomplishment is wrought.

“*Skyrie.*”

“Du Hebst Mich Liebend über Mich”

SINCE this is true; that thou dost love me, dear;
That thou wilt stoop my life to sanctify;
That thou wilt raise me now ere youth shall die,
Above my twilight shadows, deep and drear,
That I may reach the purer region high
Where thou dost dwell, and ever still be near
Thy side, and ever hear thy singing, clear
And sweet as song of seraph in the sky:

My love will teach me all that thou hast known
Of God and life, that I may catch through thee
Prophetic glimpses of His truth and grace;
And watch in thee His semblance, clearly shown,
Till in the sunlight of eternity,
I come, at last to meet Him face to face.

“*Skyrie.*”

Love's Prophecy

IF one of us should leave this world of dreams
And pass beyond the portals of the West,
And one should still be left to mourn our love,
The vacant world would grow disconsolate,
And all the glory of life's flowers would fade.
It could not be if one of us were dead
And dwelling calm in heaven in deathless life,
Happy, but thinking oft of other days,
And watching as the loved one moved alone;
And one were still on earth in living death,
Loving the memories of bygone years,
Listening for echoes of the long-loved voice;
That no surprisal from the other world
Would flash from soul to soul across the gulf.
Surely the one in heaven would know the thoughts
Which rose like incense from the yearning earth;
For even life on high with God would be
In purer harmony with His own self,
If those above could feel the happiness
Coming from consciousness of human love,
Which keeps their memories green and fresh on earth.
Surely the one below would sometime feel
A sudden rending of the veil of sense,
A sudden lifting of the mists of doubt;
And then the vision of immortal love
Would gleam with aureate gladness from on high,
Flooding the soul with pure, eternal light.
A consciousness would sometime surely come
That one still loved, though long since passed from
earth,
Was thinking, dreaming yet of days of yore—
Was watching from the sky's star-trellised bowers,

Love's Prophecy

The face he would, yet would not see grow old.
What friending sweetness to the lonely heart
To know that when life's clamor fades away,
One shall be found within the other world
Who waits unsatisfied 'mid seraph choirs,
In vivid memory of earthly love!
And when the loved one, loving still, shall pass
Beyond the glory of the sunset sky;
Our souls united there shall cherish still
Their deathless love transformèd, changed, sublimed,
That it may live in heaven as erst on earth.
We shall be glad through all eternity,
And wander hand in hand with hearts at rest,
In meadows lit with clear celestial light;
And tell the story of our human love,
And smile in pity for our human tears;
Knowing the sorrow of the sadder days
Was but the prelude of the joy to come.

"Skyrie."

Lines Sent with a Sun-Dial

MAY all the hours of all the years to be,
Through sun and shadow turn thy thoughts
to me
Whose guarding friendship watches over thee,
As mountains watch thy garden silently.

"Skyrie."

“Mein Herz Gleicht Ganz
dem Meere, hat Sturm
und Ebb und Fluth”

I

MY soul is a sleepless tide
With surge and ebb and flow,
When thy love-thoughts shimmering glide,
Through the waves where the moon-beams glow.

II

But far in the depths of my life
Are fathomless caves of the sea,
Where the waves of the world's wild strife
Are calmed, O Love, by thee.

New York.

Dedication for a Love Poem

I HEARD a song in my heart—
A silent song,
In cadence strong
Singing with natural art
Of love for thee,
My love, Amie.

And near thee bending low
I would repeat
In accents sweet
And measured music slow,
My song to thee
Of love, Amie.

I love thee not as men
Are wont to love:
For far above
My spirit's noblest ken
Art thou, Amie:—
Yet love I thee.

Incarnate pureness! Dream
And hope come true!
The silver dew,
On azure flowers agleam,
Has not, Amie,
Thy purity.

Dedication for a Love Poem

Vainly I seek to sing
That song replete
With music meet;
And yet I fain would bring
These thoughts to thee,
Of love, Amie.

"Skyrie."

Love's Maytime

WE two shall see the Maytime still,
In days with Autumn rife;
When wintry winds blow bleak and chill,
And we near the bourne of life:

For Love is ever young and kind;
And Love will with us stay,
Till we in life's December find
The flowers and birds of May.

"Skyrie."

POEMS OF NATURE

Fringed Gentian

PURE and sweet in thine azure sleep
With folded petals lie,
In childlike confidence, calm and deep,
Hearing the lullaby
Of autumn night-wind sadly singing,
Through branches of oak and pine,
Tenderly, softly, onward bringing
The news of the year's decline.

When slumber songs with night shall cease,
And day comes glad and clear,
Ever in childlike trust and peace,
Knowing nor doubt nor fear,
Watch where the happy clouds are stealing
Through fathomless depths of blue,
Still in thine upward look revealing
Confidence calm and true.

Skyrie."

The Pine

Written at the suggestion of M. M.

STANDING on the wind-swept height
Where the wheeling eagles light,
Striving toward the tranquil sky,
Clinging ever, lone on high,
Sturdy pine-tree thou dost grow,
Far above the vales below:
Constant still through sun and storm,
As the fleeting years transform
All the weaker, trembling trees,
Yielding to each passing breeze.
Patient, thou, when daylight fades
Through the dreamy woodland glades;
All the varied seasons through,
With each vagrant fairy hue.
Winter's icy dazzling pall,
Flame-transfigured dying Fall,
Spring and Summer glad with glory
Tell their changing, changeless story,
While thou standest, steadfast, true,
Chilled with sleet or drowsy dew.
Thou dost love each transient cloud,
Clinging round thee like a shroud,
And thy singing soul rejoices
In the faintly falling voices,
Which the wild winds, whispering low,
Breathe across the fields of snow.

Eagle Rock.

A Landscape

A WINTRY moon above the dusky stream
Shone suddenly between dark clouds, and shore
And wave were lighted by its vacant gleam;
That in the instant all the mantle hoar
Of ice and snow emerged from darkness. Far
The tide and fringing banks appeared in light
Of silver, spectral, pale and chill. A star
Was freezing down the gloomy voiceless height
Of Heaven. There seemed no note of passion there,
Or any sign of any stir of life,
No breath of sadness nor of joy or prayer;
But all the ghostly gleaming scene was rife
With sense of solitude, and silent things
Immutable and passionless, serene
And calm. The trees alone like demon wings
Instinct with life were shuddering, for between
Their naked boughs,—while broken storm-clouds fled
In panic at its onslaught, far on high—
The frozen night-wind wailed in lonely dread,
And cried its anguish to the heedless sky.

"Belvoir."

Resurrection

WHEN trees stand forth transfigured, fair
 In golden-vestured glory
 Of the Fall, and later bare
 Their boughs before the hoary
Winter's ice and shrouding snow,
 And seem to some so sad
Before their frozen sleep; I know
 No sadness but am glad,
From consciousness that after death
 Comes life's perfection—pure
And strong and true—borne on the breath
 Of Spring which shall endure.

"Skyrie."

To the Hudson

O MIGHTY daughter of the Western sphere,
Majestic river, thou whose tranquil wave
Swells onward through deep shade or sunlight
clear,

Like organ voices in cathedral nave:
I thank thee for the message thou hast brought
To me, of ever constant strength. When all
The work I have achieved seems less than naught,
And weariness has cast its gloomy pall
Over my spirit, thou hast seemed to say:

“Persist, recoil not from life’s sacrifice,
Renew the battle; know nor pause, nor stay;
And through the conflict greater strength will rise
In thee, that all thy haunting doubts shall seem
But dying fancies of a faded dream.”

Belvoir.”

Wild Rose

ROSE in the woodland burning,
O Springtime's fairest shrine!
The lonely wind is yearning
To steal, in the day's decline
A kiss from thy petals stooping
With evening's lustral freight,
Sad in the twilight drooping
With love that it cannot sate.

Live! while the daylight lingers
Through dreaming tides of June;
Live! though no weary fingers
Shall pluck thee and read thy rune
Of the soul's supreme communion
Through beauty's raptured love,
And intimate reunion
With the perfect soul above.

"Skyrie."

A Memory

I N golden and scarlet pomp of Fall,
 Sabled with cedars the valley lay;
 With darkling storm-clouds over all,
 Save here and there where a gleaming ray
From the sun, like a molten sword of fire,
 Slanting fell from the flaming sphere,
Where the hidden light of the world's desire
 Is throned in the golden atmosphere.
The river browned with a recent rain,
 With crested ridges of white-capped foam,
Heedless of beauty in hill and plain,
 Eagerly swept to its ocean home.
The azure mountains far away
 Majestic rose neath the dark gray sky,
Pinnacled clear on the verge of day,
 Steadfast, immutable, calm and high;
Till a silent cloud of silver snow
 Passed like a veil o'er the domes of blue,
And the sun behind in a sudden glow
 Colored its edge with a fervid hue.

"Ardmore."

Vesper

ALONE with the hazy mountains;
Alone with the sunset sky;
Alone with the woodland fountains,
When forest murmurs die;

High o'er the steadfast river,
With voices of birds above,
Singing to God the giver,
Whose fairest gift is love;

I watched the shadows stealing
Like spies of the coming night,
With ghostly fingers feeling
The strength of the dying light.

I knew the day was ended,
But I saw the moon arise;
And stars their silver blended
With fading evening skies.

Ben Lancaster.

Before Sunrise in the Mountains

THE ghostly heralds of the day unborn
Rise from the misty fastnesses of light,
Stirring the deathlike calm of dusky night
With faint forebodings of the infant morn,
Which soon will all the hollow darkness smite
With rays of brightness, till the shadows torn
From dim secluded valleys, all forlorn,
Will slowly fade before its glory bright.

In this dread hour when joyless night is dying,
The world is full of spirits weird and wild,
Which flit fantastic on their twilight way—
Intangible as phantom music crying
Through whispering pines, until they see the mild
Approach of light and vanish from the day.

"Skyrie."

Whip-poor-will

BIRD through the midnight calling
In plaintive love-notes long;
O'er the listening forest falling
With the magical might of song:—

O bird so sad, so lonely,
Can thy call calm Nature move?
Is thy life dependent only
On requital of thy love?

The moon sweeps on unheeding,
Gray mist enshrouds the hills;
Oh cease thy passionate pleading!
My heart with thine anguish thrills.

Nay, why shouldst thou cease confessing
Thy love, though it hopeless be?
Love's self is sufficient blessing
Lone bird, for thee and me.

Skyrie."

POEMS OF THOUGHT

Faith

THE solemn song of wind in waving trees,
The blue light lingering long in mountain lakes,
The setting sun's resplendent depths of gold,
The fairy beauty of the fleeting brooks,
Have all a message, clear yet mystical,
For those who heed the whispers of the world,
And listen for the story which the wind,
The fading sunlight, and the lakes and brooks,
Are ever telling through the changing year
With purpose changeless as eternity.

Like dogs that look into their master's eyes
And strive there to divine the secret thing
They cannot understand, which men call speech,
Are human souls before the infinite:
We hear the voice of Nature, but the sense
Is lost.

In longings impotent we spend
The years, but ever hold a hope undimmed,
That when our lives are touched by friendly death,
We then shall know as we ourselves are known,
And learn the meaning of the melodies
Undying voices sing throughout the world,
Which was beyond the reach of human thought,
But which the soul when clear from earthly dross
Will comprehend through God's eternity.

"Skyrie."

Revival

UNDER the peaceful midnight and the star-
embroidered sky,
Over the quiet spaces where cradled snow-
flakes lie,
Far from the restless city with its passionate, godless
din,
From the cries and the wounds of sorrow, and the
pitiless scourge of sin,
I wander alone with Nature till I feel my life grow
whole,
Till I hear God's voice awaking once more in the
depths of my soul.
My heart grows great in worship with the well-re-
membered sense
Of sheer delight in living, and wonder-eyed suspense,
For I see the stars interpret the runes of death and
birth,
And hear all Nature singing God's lullaby to earth.

"Ardmore."

The Call to Urania

IMMORTAL Love! of life the lyric crown,
Again I feel thee leave thine azure throne,
And touch my soul that sought thee vainly down
The gloom of empty days and weeks, alone,
In patient expectation of thy love.
Once didst thou dwell in me and make my soul
Transcend its usual bounds: I soared above
The strife of part with part, and knew the whole
Glad harmony of Nature's happy aim,
A perfect synthesis of living law;—
And lo! a rapture through my spirit came
Singing of all the blessed things I saw.
Then thou didst show how beauty filled the world,
In every flower that breathed beneath the sun;
How Heaven's banner of the stars unfurled,
Blazoned that life with love and God was one.
Why hast thou left me lone to wander here
Uncertain through the dusk of mortal ways,
To learn the chill of doubt and night and fear,
And miss thy presence through the lingering days?
I need thee, Love! Not vainly let me stand
With hands outstretched in imploration dumb,
I feel thee now within the borderland
Of thought, come back, dear Love, to me, come,
come!

New York.

De Profundis clamavi ad Te, Domine

THE odorless woods of winter lie
Enwrapped in magical, mute sleep;
And all the winds that blow across
Them bear no breath of fragrance, till
The spring shall breathe upon them; make
Them rich with passionate perfume.

An opal oft-times slumbers, dull
And lifeless, chill, and wan, nor shows
The presence of the soul within,
Until a nameless something wakes
Its wondrous life to blaze in glowing
Beauty for a little space.

So too the souls of men seem dead.
We move as in a trance, enslaved
By custom, or the whelming tide
Of common things and daily toil.
No fragrant incense rises rich
To God from our dead lives; no glow
Of burning beauty like an aura
Clings about us; poor we are
As winter's empty scentless wind;
Lifeless as opals, shade enthralled.

Yet sometimes in the silent night,
When musing o'er a poet's thought;
Or moved by nature or the voice
Of melody, we feel a dim

De Profundis clamavi ad Te, Domine

Mysterious presence which awakes
The dormant sentience of our souls,
And lifts us for brief instants, till
The rapture pass, from out the shadows
Of our common ways, to know
Divinity within ourselves;
And feel beneath unstable life
The fixed serenity of God.

One day such vision came to me;
But soon relentless fingers drew
Again the veil of twilight o'er
My spirit's sight; I felt old doubts
Enshroud me, and I prayed aloud:

“ O God,” I cried in pain, “ why must I fall
Once more from that far, wondrous height where all
My soul enraptured, spellbound felt the light
Of Thy near presence rend the veil of night
And tremulous mortality, and saw
With wondering eyes, Thy wonderful wise law
At work omnipotent, in swerveless ways,
Through all the common-place of common days.
Why must I fall, O God, from that high sphere
Wherein the glory of our life was clear,
And move mid gloom and doubt and twilight shades
In sateless longing, while Thy presence fades
And passes viewless from my yearning sight
To leave my soul lone-wandering through the night? ”

De Profundis clamavi ad Te, Domine

I prayed, and through the silence came a voice
With far-off accents calm and musical:

“Countless suns and stars and moons
Sing their changeless, joyous runes
Through the spheric cycles long;
And the burden of their song
Is ‘Love transcendent, Love sublime!’
All the wheeling spheres keep time
With this harmony divine;
Stealing like an anodyne
On the hearts by sorrow tossed,
On the lives through blindness lost.
In thy erring soul I mark
One divinely nurtured spark
Of the Heavenly Law, and thou
Must fan the embers fading now,
For the fire is from above,
Where the very God is love.”

New York.

God's Lighthouse

I

'T WAS only a gleam in the night,
Through the swirl of storm-swept spray,
But it thrilled my soul with light
More glad than the dawn of day;—

For the beacon which glowed above
The throbbing ocean's foam
Was lit by the hand of love,
And burned on the hearth of home.

II

My soul is a tiny boat
On life's storm-troubled sea,
But wheresoe'er it float
Is the gleam of eternity;

For that wondrous glow in the dark
Is the light of love on high,
And it guides my doubt-tossed bark
To its haven in the sky.

New York.

The Temple of the Soul

A Dream

I

A SILENT temple, dim, unseen, alone,
Stood in a desert place; no anthem wound
In wonder-woven magic webs of sound
Throughout the cloistered colonnades; no tone
Of mellow organ-voices e'er awoke
The dreaming echoes from their silver sleep
Among the many-columned aisles, or broke
The solemn silentness where stillness deep
Unbroken vigil kept; no antiphone
From priest and choir arose to God's far throne.

II

One sound there was; the lonely desert wind
Shrilled o'er the vault of shadow-veilèd roof
A dirge more drear than silence; for aloof
From life it seemed, and sorrow undefined
It sang in sadness. There the day and night
Kept calm monotony in changeless reign;
For ne'er could sunbeams laden with delight
Expel the darkness from that ancient fane,
Nor moon nor star in refluent glory find
An entrance there, where twilight lay enshrined.

The Temple of the Soul: A Dream

III

And so o'er all this home of silence clung
The darkness. Windows there were of stained glass,
Purple and dusk, through which no light could pass
Save pale and joyless rays, which died among
The shadows, impotent. In gratitude
No waxen flickering tapers burned; for here
No worshiper had come, but solitude
Had ruled supreme for many a dying year,
Since golden-fretted censers, idly swung
By vested priests, their fragrant incense flung.

IV

None knew this solitary fane but I,
Who wandering lonely, found it long ago,
And loved it for its twilight calm and low
Aerial-whispering friendless wind on high
Above the rafters. Once therein I found
A corridor which led I knew not where,
And followed idly till the gloom profound
Of buried night enwrapped me; and Despair
Came on me, though I felt not she was nigh,
And longings for the cloudless summer sky.

V

A sudden glow of wonderful soft light
Gleamed on a turning, down the dusky way,

The Temple of the Soul: A Dream

And following onward further from the day
I stood entranced before this vision bright:
A chapel lit with yellow mystic rays,
Although no taper burned therein: O'er all
The floor were semblances of flowers; ablaze
The walls with pictures of the world—of Fall
And Spring, of men and birds and trees; the night
Shone out above with moon and star bedight.

VI

I bowed in silent adoration there,
Although I knew not what the shrine might be:
For all the truth of all eternity
Seemed brooding round me. Ah, so very fair
Was Life! so beautiful the world, where gleamed
That lustrous splendor! Would not one more wise
Than I have sought the perfect thing I dreamed
To find in flowers and woods and summer skies
Therein?:—The vision, far beyond compare,
Of life's consummate beauty pure and rare?

VII

But beauty's self remained unheard, unseen;
Not manifest in any curvèd line
Of perfect grace and symmetry divine;
But dimly sensed in moonlight's woven sheen,
Past far-off vistas, in uncertain gleams.
I could not see her fill the awe-struck world,

The Temple of the Soul: A Dream

And pulse in glory down unnumbered streams
Of heavenly light, and dwell serene, impearled
In singing flowers and sprays of budding green:—
I saw, but knew not what these things might mean.

VIII

And still the truth was veiled, while all my thought
Was borne by moaning winds along a soundless tide,
With unseen shores where ruined hopes abide.
And life was passing, while the goal I sought
Seemed ever just beyond. I heard not those
Who called in friendship's tone; I touched no hand;
And through the silence loneliness arose
Like mist that rises from a river's strand
In cool September morns, till hills are caught
Within its chilling shroud, of darkness wrought.

IX

In doubt I left the shrine; and looked along
The temple's nave, where moveless shadows slept
Unchanged; while far above the lonely breezes wept
Among the towers, still their same low song.
Then new-born hope impelled me toward the life
Of men: There strife of part with part I saw,
And glints of beauty gleaming through the strife;
But cosmic interchange of law with law
Was still unseen; and all the hurried throng
With tear-stained faces bowed to ruling wrong.

The Temple of the Soul: A Dream

X

They would not seek the beauty I had sought,
They left me on my starry quest alone;
While ebb'd my partial sight of truth; till flown
Was all my vision—all my wingèd thought,
Or chained to earth that never more it rose
Battling to scale the cloud-hid peaks of life.
But once in youthful courage Spring arose
To wage her old hereditary strife
With winter: Through her flowers, to me she brought
A re-created vision, beauty fraught.

XI

I took again the long, untrodden way,
And followed upward from the roar of strife,
From dead ideals and dying hopes, and life
Of men who struggle blindly, fight and pray
For unrealities and worthless goals,
Each one alone in friendless haste, while youth
Flees madly on toward age; nor lift their souls
To seek the deep, serene, eternal truth
Which thrills the world with God, as night and day
In refluent beauty hold alternate sway.

XII

I found my temple standing, still apart
From life's unresting turbulence. But ah,

The Temple of the Soul: A Dream

How changed! Enshrined above the altar far
Adown the nave a maiden sat. No art
Could paint in cadenced words, or seraph dream
Of dædal-chorded harmony, or light
Of long undying colors, how supreme
Her beauty shone. The silent gloom of night
Had vanished silently, compelled to part,
For gladness ruled the fane and ruled my heart.

XIII

Sunlight was waving through her golden hair,
And smiling from unfathomed eyes, whose hue
Was like the fringed gentian's heavenly blue;
Her face was as the sunlight—very fair.
Although in mortal form, she seemed more pure
And true than aught I knew on earth:—
A saint of some transcendent dream,—secure
In half divinity, from any birth
Of human doubt. In her was I aware
Of Beauty's incarnation, past compare.

XIV

With sudden hope I gazed, and saw my dream
In her complete: All Beauty, Good and Truth
Enshrined in her, with that to which my youth
Had clung, nor found but in the fitful gleam
Of aspiration. Many flowers I brought
To her, and laid them near her feet, while love

The Temple of the Soul: A Dream

With adoration blended. Once I thought
She turned to me and smiled—and all above
Me and around me dimmed; as love supreme
Flowed through me flaming, in a deathless stream.

XV

In love's sweet ritual I sang; while woke
My life to nobler impulse, thought more sure.
For mighty Love can bid the soul endure
In strength; and lift it from itself, and yoke
Its deadless dreams of good to firm resolve
And high attainment; bring it into tune
With God, and raise it as the years revolve
To richer life—as April grows to June.
And once she fixed her eyes on mine, and broke
My worship with her dreamed-of voice and spoke:

XVI

“Yea, Love, I trust thee. I have proved thee true.”
My heart was faint with pain of ecstasy;
I thought it still a dream, too fair to be
The truth, but lo! she stood with love's sweet dew
Within her eyes, and fragrance round her hair:
I saw in her the end of all my quest.
She took me by the hand, and led me where
The sun was slanting down a lucent West,
And showed me how the sky was far more blue
Than erst I dreamed; how fair the flowers grew;

XVII

How all the beauty I had longed to prove
In life, was thrilling through each human heart.
She showed my fault to seek from life apart
That life's perfection; showed how subtly move
Through all the world the laws I failed to find.
She led me then within the lustrous shrine,
Where I no more bewildered, doubting, blind,
Saw visioned Beauty's self, undimmed, divine;—
And bore to see, for there I rose above
Myself, and knew Life consummate in Love.

"Skyrie."

Omnipresence

THEY fields are fairer than the fairest face,
And full of messages for those who know
To read their hidden meaning, for they show
Thy matchless love in every lowliest place.

Thy stars shine brighter than the silver snow;
They fill unfathomed depths of soundless space
With signs of Thee, whose love would fain efface
The searing characters of human woe.

Thy love is plain to see in field and star—
Thy purpose and the harmony of life—
And in Thy ways with men I see Thee too,
Guiding us still, though we may wander far
From Thine intent, and working out through strife
Eternal beauty, old but ever new.

“ *Skyrie.*”

“Une Croix! Et l’Oubli, la Nuit et le Silence!”

FOREDOOMED to fail and die! yea God, so
 young
 To lie inert beneath the fragrant flowers,
To leave my joyous-hearted songs unsung,
 To find the number of my happy hours.

Foredoomed, so young, to fail and pass and die;
 And what is death that I should watch with dread
His stealthy shadow creeping slowly nigh?
 Are there nor joys nor flowers among the dead?

Death is a darkling mystery none may solve;
 A sudden end of all our joy and strife,
A sudden summons as the years revolve,
 To dull oblivion or perfected life.

I fain would live my three-score years and ten
 Warmed by the sunlight I have found so fair;
I fain would dream some glad years more, and then
 Relinquish life, nor quite so greatly care.

Yet death may prove more gentle, sweet and kind
 Than life, and if, ere all my songs be sped
He come, perchance surprised I then shall find
 Undreamed of Springtime flowers among the dead.

Swan Songs

I

WHEN the sun's last slanting rays
Set the rapturous clouds ablaze
All in gold,
Then we see with clearer vision
Far into the fields Elysian;
And we hold
For some fleeting instants, briefly,
Knowledge of the things which chiefly
In our life
Are beyond the reach of thought
Though they eagerly are sought
Through the strife.

II

With the dying daylight's gleaming
Glides a lustrous radiance streaming
From above;
And we look into the spaces
Of the joyous far-off places
Whence the love
Of God, like summer sunbeams glowing,
Or majestic rivers flowing
To the sea,
Comes without one breath of sadness,
Bright with messages of gladness,
Calm and free.

Swan Songs

III

So some mortals sinking, dying
When their earthly life is flying
 Fast away,
Pass, upheld by God securely,
Down the gloomy path which surely
 Leads to day.
Then we feel how strong and holy,
Filled with kindness to the lowly,
 Were their lives;
And we see their knowledge strengthen,
For, while death's deep shadows lengthen,
 Light revives.

IV

When in peace they lie at last,
And pain and trouble all are past
 From their eyes;
'Mid the mournful, funeral dirges,
Triumph wakes and upward surges
 Toward the skies;
For they lose all earth-born sadness,
As their spirits rise in gladness
 From us here:
And we seem to hear them singing
Words with which the skies are ringing:
 "God is near."

"Skyrie."

The Return to the Silent Land

A Fragment

HIGH on a mountain where the rugged trees
Clung sturdily, I heard the crooning breeze
Whisper its silver-sounding slumber song
Among the cliffs, and o'er the valleys long,
Where drowsy boughs were nodding dreamy-wise.
I saw far up the deep, eternal skies
The summer clouds which slumbrous steal athwart
The sun, till ruffian clamorous winds distort
Their shape, and make them fade and pass like men.
The vision thrilled me: for my soul till then
Had been through weary stretch of darkening days,
Bound in the thralling bondage of the ways
Of cities, where the clanging notes of strife
Discordant voice our fever-fitful life.
Into my soul the glowing beauty crept
And waked my senses which so long had slept,
Callous and cold, as winter still and hoary,—
Till now the fair transcendent summer's glory,
Thrilled through my being like a seraph's song,
And tuned me to such music as the throng
Of choiring angels long have chanted there
Where perfect harmony is perfect prayer.
And now my spirit as a heavenly lyre,
Waked by God's fingers to a sudden fire,
Breathed tremulous, through every eager string
The very melodies the seraphs sing.
I felt the love of God around me flow,
Changeless, effulgent, through me burn and glow,

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And seemed to rise above the things of earth,
Pure as the moon-beams at the dawn's pale birth.
The scrolls of all the ages were unrolled
Before my spirit,—mystic fold on fold;
The gates of life and death were opened wide,
That I might see the surging human tide
Immutable, which as it rose and fell,
Instinct with hopes of Heaven and fears of Hell,
Cast ever on the shores of love or hate
Some human wreckage from all-wrecking Fate.
Yet sadness there was none, for on my thought
Of all the ways that human souls are bought
For gold or dross or shadows of a dream,
There burst like moonlight on a darkling stream,
The glow of love, abroad with sheltering wings
Caressingly, upon the world which sings
Its hymn of wondrous rapture, while the spheres,
Through æons of the numberless long years,
Keep time and tune in magical mute song.

“Ardmore.”

Dedication

I DARE not hope that thou wilt value these
My boyhood's dreams, for aught of beauty
found

Herein, and poesy. They cannot please
Or touch thee of themselves; but as the sound
Of music sweeter is, when waked by hands

Beloved; or as a child's low song above
The stronger voices of the world, withstands
Forgetful years, and floods the soul with love

For him who sang the song:—so I am sure
Because of him who dreamed these early dreams,
They shall be dear to thee, and still endure.

And though no wealth of thought or beauty
gleams

Through them, yet in thy heart I bid them live,
Accepted as the best I have to give.

New York.

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